

Remarks

Applicant has reviewed the Office Action dated as mailed December 21, 2004 and the documents cited therewith and the present amendment prepared in response thereto.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 4 through 10 and 16 through 29 are pending in the application. Claims 4, 16, 21, 24 and 29 are independent claims. Each of the independent claims and dependent claim 20 have been amended. Claims 5, 7, 17 and 28 have also been amended solely to make use of the term "brake lever" consistent throughout the claims.

The Examiner rejected independent claims 4, 16 and 29 as being unpatentable over Greer, Rhyn and Sorensen et al. The Examiner considered that Greer showed all of the claimed subject matter except for the pivotably mounted upper jaw with a spring biasing the upper jaw toward the lower jaw and a lower jaw having an upper portion not intersecting the slide bar and supported only by the lower portion of the lower jaw. Rhyn was relied on for the teaching of an upper jaw spring biased toward a lower jaw and Sorensen for a lower jaw having an upper portion not intersecting the slide bar and supported only by the lower portion.

Claims 4 has been amended to require that the lower portion of the lower jaw have a length in a direction along the slide bar and that a portion of the brake lever extends adjacent the lower portion for substantially the length of the lower portion such that a user may adjust a position of the lower jaw on the slide bar by actuating the brake lever and moving the lower jaw relative to the slide bar. Neither Greer, Rhyn or Sorensen either alone or in combination show the claimed arrangement between the brake lever and the lower jaw lower portion as set forth in claims 4. It is submitted that claim 4 defines over the art relied on by the Examiner and is allowable. Claims 5 through 10 depend from claim 4 and are believed to be allowable for these reasons as well.

Claim 16 has been amended to eliminate the requirement that the upper jaw be mounted

pivotal to the slide bar and that a spring be mounted between the upper jaw and the slide bar. Claim 16 has also been amended to require that the second portion have a gripping surface opposite the first portion and that a portion of the brake lever extends to the gripping surface such that a thumb of a user can contact both the gripping surface and said portion of the brake lever at the same time such that a user adjusts a position of the lower jaw on the slide by depressing the brake lever and repositioning the lower jaw with the thumb. Neither Greer, Rhyn or Sorensen either alone or in combination show the claimed arrangement between the brake lever and the gripping surface on the lower jaw lower portion as set forth in claim 16. It is submitted that claim 16 defines over the art relied on by the Examiner and is allowable. Claims 17 through 20 depend from claim 16 and are believed to be allowable for these reasons as well.

Claim 29 has been amended to require that the brake lever extends such that the lower portion is between the brake lever and the slide bar and wherein a user may adjust a position of the lower jaw on the slide by actuating said lever and moving said lower jaw relative to said slide bar. Neither Greer, Rhyn or Sorensen either alone or in combination show the claimed arrangement between the brake lever, lower portion of the lower jaw and the slide bar as set forth in claim 29. It is submitted that claim 29 defines over the art relied on by the Examiner and is allowable.

The Examiner rejected independent claims 21 and 24 as being unpatentable over Greer, Beesley et al. and Sorensen et al. The Examiner considered that Greer showed all of the claimed subject matter except for the pivotably mounted upper jaw with a spring, a ratcheting mechanism/incremental teeth on the slide and a lower jaw having an upper portion not intersecting the slide bar and supported only by the lower portion of the lower jaw. The examiner relied on Beesley for the pivoted upper jaw with a spring and the ratcheting mechanism and Sorensen for a lower jaw having an upper portion not intersecting the slide bar and supported only by the lower portion.

Claim 21 has been amended to require that the second portion of the lower jaw has a gripping surface opposite the first portion and that a portion of the brake lever extends to the gripping surface such that a thumb of a user can contact both the gripping surface and the portion of

the brake lever at the same time to adjust a gap between the upper jaw and the lower jaw with the same hand by depressing the brake lever with the thumb and simultaneously applying a force to the gripping surface with the thumb. Neither Greer, Beesley or Sorensen either alone or in combination show the claimed arrangement between the brake lever and the gripping surface on the lower jaw lower portion as set forth in claim 21. It is submitted that claim 21 defines over the prior art relied on by the Examiner and is allowable. Claims 22 and 23 depend from claim 21 and are believed to be allowable for these reasons as well.

Claim 24 has been amended to eliminate the requirement that the upper jaw be pivoted to the slide bar. Claim 24 has also been amended to require that a single slide bar is provided and that the second portion defines an orifice for receiving the slide bar and a recess disposed along a gripping surface. A portion of the brake lever extends along the second portion of the lower jaw and into the recess such that a user may open the jaws with a thumb, disengaging the brake lever from the slide bar and urging the lower jaw away from the upper jaw. Neither Greer, Beesley or Sorensen either alone or in combination show the claimed arrangement between the brake lever, recess and gripping surface on the lower jaw lower portion as set forth in claim 24. It is submitted that claim 24 defines over the prior art relied on by the Examiner and is allowable. Claims 25 through 28 depend from claim 24 and are believed to be allowable for these reasons as well.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, the Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in the present application are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims at the earliest possible date are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any questions about the present Amendment a telephone interview is requested.

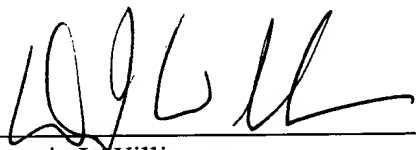
If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4365.

Respectfully submitted,

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